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ABOVE-NORMAL HEATWAVE DAYS BETWEEN MARCH AND MAY: IMD

Above-normal heatwave days are expected over most parts of the country between March and May, the IMD said in its forecast on Saturday

ENTIRE GANGETIC PLAIN UNDER HEATWAVE

The regions under a severe heatwave risk include West Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab, southern and eastern Maharashtra, eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Gangetic West Bengal, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and parts of north Karnataka and northern regions of Tamil Nadu, said IMD DG Mrutyunjay Mohapatra

RISKS TO VULNERABLE POPULATION

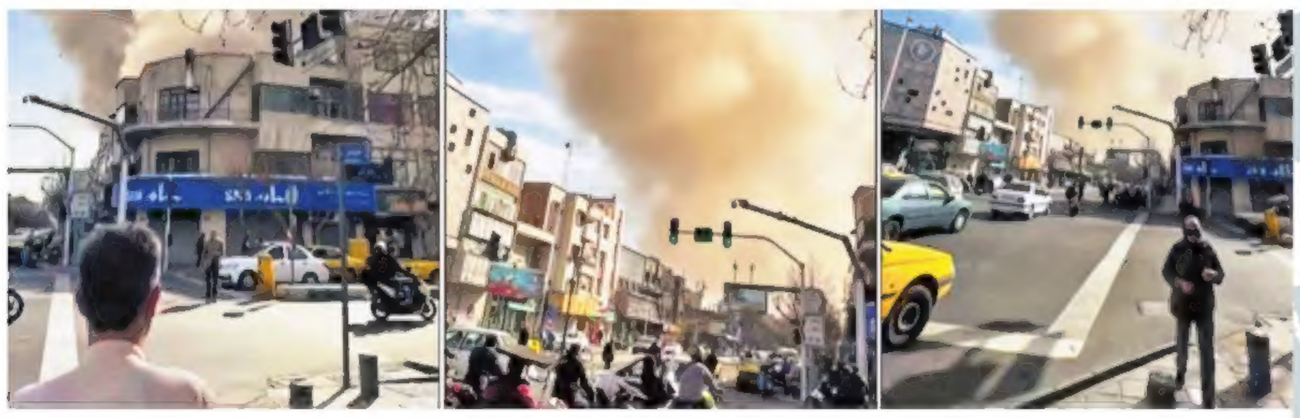
- The likelihood of a severe heatwave may pose risks to vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children, outdoor workers, and individuals with pre-existing medical conditions
- Many parts of the country are may experience above-normal rainfall in March, while northeast India may get below normal rainfall

Third

HIGHEST MINIMUM TEMPERATURE WITNESSED THIS FEB SINCE 1901

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

● US, Israel launch a flurry of strikes on Iranian targets ● Tehran hits back against Tel Aviv, Gulf allies of the US ● Brazen bid to disturb peace, say Russia, China



Combo footage of social media videos – verified by AFPTV teams – of an explosion in Tehran on Saturday, after the US launched its attack on Iran | AFP

REGIME CHANGE WAR

Mapping the attack and counter-attack

The map shows the joint US-Israel strikes targeting key military installations in Iran such as Isfahan, Bushehr, Minab, Tabriz and a host of other regions. In response, Iran struck Gulf allies of the US such as Qatar, UAE, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and parts of Israel

WEST ASIA ON THE BOIL

1. At the time of going to press, Israeli PM Netanyahu claimed there were signs that Iran Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was killed. But there was no confirmation. His palace though was bombed
2. Several flights across West Asia were cancelled as countries closed their airspace. Iran, Iraq, Israel, Syria, Kuwait and the UAE announced closure of their skies. People were evacuated from the bombed sites
3. The US said it used single-use drones to attack Iran for the first time. Iran's Revolutionary Guards warned vessels against entering the Strait of Hormuz, which is a global energy chokepoint

AGENCIES @ Tehran/Tel Aviv

IN what appears to be a hit more focussed on a regime change than the nuclear proliferation talks, the US and Israel attacked Iran on Saturday. Shortly after, Iran retaliated by firing missiles and drones toward Israel and US military bases in West Asia.

The Israeli army said around 200 fighter jets took part in the "extensive attack" on military targets in Iran. Some of the first strikes hit areas around the offices of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

A strike on a school in southern Iran killed 63 people, a local official said. The Iranian Red Crescent said at least 201 people were killed and 747 wounded in the strikes. Iran soon launched a counter missile salvo, whose impact could be heard in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait UAE and Israel.

Iran intends to continue its offensive "until the aggressor is punished," an Iranian source told."No significant damage has been done to Iran's missile and defense capabilities, and Iran has prepared itself for a long war," the source added.

Plumes of black smoke hung over Tehran, including in the Pasteur district, site of the home of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei. Iranian local media said Khamenei, Pezeshkian, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and "all the commanders" of Iran's army were in good health.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards sent radio messages to vessels warning them not to enter the Strait of Hormuz, the EU's Red Sea naval mission told AFP in a statement.

The attacks came after US President Donald Trump expressed frustration at Iran's stance in negotiations over its nuclear and missile programmes. "We are going to destroy their missiles and raze their missile industry to the ground," Trump said, warning of possible US casualties.

Explosions were heard over central Doha and near Al-Udeid military base, the largest US facility in the region.

Witnesses in Dubai saw missiles streaking across the sky. The famed Fairmont The Palm hotel and Atlantis The Royal, were attacked, and the area was evacuated. Kuwait and the UAE reported intercepting incoming Iranian missiles. Abu Dhabi said it "reserves its full right to respond."

Iran called on the UN Security Council to take "immediate" steps to halt the aggression. In a letter to UN secretary-general, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said the council must "take immediate measures to halt this unlawful use of force." P12

New Delhi urges restraint, respect for sovereignty

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

INDIA on Saturday voiced deep concern over the escalating situation in Iran and the wider Gulf region, urging all sides to exercise restraint and respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states. In a statement, the External Affairs Ministry said: "India is deeply concerned at the recent developments in Iran and the Gulf region. We urge all sides to exercise restraint, avoid escalation, and prioritise the safety of civilians."

The government underscored that dialogue—not military confrontation—must guide the path forward. "Dialogue and diplomacy should be pursued to de-escalate tensions and address underlying issues. Sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states must be respected," the statement added, reiterating India's longstanding position on adherence to international law and regional stability.

Parallelly, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar worked the phones and held separate conversations with the foreign ministers of Iran and Israel, conveying India's deep concern over the situation and reiterating New Delhi's call for restraint and diplomacy.

"Had a telecon with Iranian FM Seyed Abbas Araghchi this evening. Shared India's deep concern at the recent developments in Iran and the region," he said on X. Jaishankar had also spoken with his Israeli counterpart Gideon Sa'ar. "Spoke with Israeli FM Gideon Sa'ar this afternoon. Reiterated India's call for dialogue and diplomacy to de-escalate tensions." The Gulf region hosts over 10 million Indians, making stability there both a strategic and humanitarian priority for New Delhi.

Baramati air crash report faults plane operator, airport

S LALITHA @ New Delhi

THE preliminary report on the Baramati air crash that killed Maharashtra deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar last month revealed the aircraft operator VSR Ventures' failure to adhere to Standard Operating Procedures, and the bypassing of the visibility norms for safe operation of flights at the aerodrome. The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) on Saturday made public its report on the accident involving Learjet-45XR.

Despite poor visibility (3 km instead of the mandatory 5 km), the cockpit crew chose to land and those manning the control gave the go-ahead, the report specified.

It pointed to the poor infrastructure and maintenance at the airport where the runway markings, which guide the pilots in landing, had faded as re-carpeting was done 11 years ago. The airport also lacked navigational aids.

"The last runway re-carpeting was carried out in March 2016 and thereafter no runway re-carpeting was carried out which resulted into fading of all the runway markings and presence of loose gravels on the runway surface," the report read.

Sharing details of the accident which occurred at 8.46 am on January 28, the AAIB said the aircraft was handed over from Pune ATC to Baramati airport when it was 38 miles away from it.

No windsock at Runway 11

The airport lacked navigational aids other than wind socks. "Two windsocks have been installed at the aerodrome, both towards RWY 29 side. No wind sock was available towards runway 11 side," it said

The tower at Baramati airfield that morning was manned by a ground instructor of a Flight Training Organisation. He was communicating with the incoming aircraft to assist the landing.

"As per the CCTV footage, the aircraft was observed to have banked towards right before impacting the terrain. It first impacted the trees before hitting the ground which is at a lower elevation than the runway surface. The ground impact of aircraft was at a lateral distance of about 50 metres on the left from edge of RWY 11," the report said.

MATTER OF SHAME

Principal assaults 2 minors, held; wife, teacher arrested too

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE principal of a private residential school, his wife and a teacher have been arrested by the Devanahalli police in a POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) case as the principal has been accused of sexually assaulting two minor sisters.

The victims initially approached the teacher to narrate their ordeal, but were told that such behaviour is common and need not be reported, the police said.

Principal Dhanajay and his wife Shailaja have been arrested by the police. Shailaja is accused of attempting to cover up the incident by coercing the victims to keep quiet and keeping them in captivity for eight days. The couple is also accused of confiscating the victims' mobile phones, fearing that they might inform their parents.

The two girls used the mobile phone of another student and reached out to their parents, complaining about the sexual assault they went through. A police complaint was filed on Friday, and the couple was arrested on Saturday. CONTINUED ON P7

EXPRESS READ

Three suffocate to death inside water sump in Whitefield

BENGALURU: A 67-year-old man, along with two others, died owing to suspected suffocation from toxic fumes while cleaning a water sump at Immadihalli under Whitefield police limits in east Bengaluru on Saturday. The deceased are Munishamappa, 67, the house owner; Rudra Kumar, 40, a plumber; and Vishwanath Achari, 24, a delivery boy | P3

PES
PES UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS 2026
ENGINEERING
B.Tech (CSE, CSE-AI&ML, ECE, EEE, ME, & BT)
M.Tech (CSE, ECE)
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MBBS
COMMERCE
B.Com (General/Hons.)
B.Com (Hons.) - ACCA / CMA / CFA / CA
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Baa-Hubballi, the beginning: J&K's crowning moment

AMIT S UPADHYE @ Hubballi

THE champagne was on ice since Friday evening. After 66 years of hardships and painful wait, Jammu and Kashmir, who was once considered the punching bag of North Zone cricket, lifted the Ranji Trophy title, getting better of a more fancied side Karnataka.

The team was ecstatic and celebrated with every ounce of whatever energy left after five days of toil. They were dancing, hugging, yelling and shouting. Their chief minister Omar Omdullah was in attendance and stood there watching the team scripting history. The team was not a hurriedly assembled cast.

J&K players celebrate after winning their first Ranji Trophy title | D HEMANTH

It was years in the making, brick by brick. They have beaten the likes of Mumbai and came close to making their first semifinals last year when Kerala took a one-run lead.

On Saturday, a draw was all J&K needed after taking a 291-run lead in the first innings. Skipper Paras Dogra, a veteran of many seasons puts it succinctly. "I cannot explain and I don't have any words. It is the biggest thing in my life. Biggest gratitude I will have in my life before I leave this word," he said.